

Salt and Serenity

Short Rib Pot Pie with Potato Topping

Inspired by Martha Stewart's recipe for Braised Short Rib, Stout, and Potato Potpies.

Makes 8-10 individual (5 inch) pot pies or a 2 quart (8x11 inches) casserole dish.

Make the ribs a day ahead and refrigerate overnight. Scrape off any fat that comes to the top after chilling and remove before shredding meat.

Filling:

- 4 pounds bone-in beef short ribs (English Cut)
- 2 Tablespoons Kosher salt
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 yellow onions, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 ribs celery, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 carrots, peeled, cut in 1/2 lengthwise, then cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1½ cups tomato paste
- 3 cups red wine (cabernet sauvignon or zinfandel would be good choices)
- 2 cups water
- 1 bunch fresh thyme, tied with kitchen string
- 2 bay leaves

Topping:

- 6 medium russet potatoes
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 thyme sprigs, leaves stripped off stems

1. Season short ribs generously with salt. Coat a pot large enough to accommodate all the meat and vegetables with olive oil and bring to a high heat. Add the short ribs to the pan and brown very well, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Do not overcrowd pan. Cook in batches, if necessary.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
3. While the short ribs are browning, puree all the vegetables and garlic in the food processor until it forms a coarse paste. When the short ribs are very brown on all sides, remove them from the pan. Drain the fat, coat the bottom of same pan with fresh oil and add the pureed vegetables. Season the vegetables generously with salt and brown until they are very dark and a crust has formed on the bottom of the pan, approximately 5 to 7 minutes. Scrape the crust and let it reform. Scrape the crust again and add the tomato paste. Brown the tomato paste for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the wine and scrape the bottom of the pan. Lower

the heat if things start to burn. Reduce the mixture by half.

4. Return the short ribs to the pan and add 2 cups water or until the water has just about covered the meat. Add the thyme bundle and bay leaves. Cover the pan and place in the preheated oven for 3 hours. Check periodically during the cooking process and add more water, if needed. Turn the ribs over halfway through the cooking time. Remove the lid during the last 20 minutes of cooking to let things get nice and brown and to let the sauce reduce. When done the meat should be very tender but not falling apart.
5. Remove thyme and bay leaves and discard. Remove ribs from braising liquid. Chill braising liquid and ribs in separate containers overnight.
6. When you are ready to assemble pies, remove meat from bones and place in a large bowl. Using your hands, shred meat very finely.
7. Skim fat off the top of the braising liquid and discard. Mix shredded meat with braising liquid.
8. Preheat oven to 375°F. Set mini pie tins on 2 baking sheets to catch any drips while baking. Divide filling among pie plates or transfer to 2 quart casserole dish.
9. Wash potatoes very well, and very thinly slice, preferably on a mandoline. Arrange potatoes over meat to form tight concentric circles, working around the edge and overlapping each potato by three-quarters. Brush with oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Scatter thyme leaves over potatoes. Bake until topping is golden and filling is bubbling, about 45 minutes for mini potpies (1 hour for large potpie)